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Draft terms of reference
Ad Hoc Working Group on Trade Efficiency

Agreed text submitted by the Chairman of Drafting Group B

1. To examine how modern organization and technology can be used to foster greater participation in international trade, in particular by small and medium-sized enterprises, giving particular attention to countries and regions less advanced in the area of trade efficiency. In this context, it shall:

- (a) identify possibilities to reduce transactional costs in international trade, particularly through trade facilitation and simplification of trade procedures, thus contributing to the fluidity of international trade flows and developing new trade links between potential and actual trading partners in all regions of the world;
- (b) taking into consideration differences in national conditions, practices and legal aspects, develop domestic guidelines or models for trade efficiency including, inter alia, simplifying, rationalizing and grouping formalities, transactions and information sources, consistent with a country's commitments under relevant agreements of the GATT, and other relevant international agreements. In this context, as appropriate, promote the development and establishment of Trade Points.

- (c) promote greater understanding and use of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), including the standards established through UNECE WP4. The Working Group will consider instruments and guidelines for the use of EDI;
 - (d) evaluate the impact of EDI-related developments and relevant technical and technological innovations on the trade efficiency of firms, and the potential participation of new players in the international trade.
2. To contribute to the utilization of market opportunities by fostering transparency in trade-related information flows, including by increasing international awareness of opportunities to access publicly available market information.
 3. To identify areas in which technical co-operation could be necessary in trade efficiency-related areas, with special regard to trade facilitation activities and the establishment of Trade Points, and possibilities to create new trade links thereby; in this context, adequate attention should be devoted to infrastructural and human resources development, and the organization of dissemination of necessary data.
 4. The Working Group shall prepare the 1994 international symposium on trade efficiency, as called for in paragraphs 157 and 158 of the Cartagena Commitment. For use at that time, the Working Group shall undertake research, prepare publications, explanatory or educational material including those that emphasize legal or other focuses.

[*] Note: In the general provision a mention should be made in final text of cooperation with the International Trade Center (ITC), and the work of UNECE Working Party 4.